

Essay

Please write and title a 500-700-word essay on the following theme:

School districts throughout Missouri and the nation are facing a shortage of teachers. In your essay, identify and explain how best to recruit students to pursue a teaching career. Reflect upon those teachers whom you consider to be excellent teachers. What skills are needed to be a high-quality teacher? Please provide examples of how high-quality teaching inspired you to succeed as a student.

Teaching is one of the most important jobs in modern society; however, it is not just a job, but a calling. Teaching is not about the pay or the benefits, it is about educating later generations to improve society and quality of life for all people. As such, recruiting teachers to fill the national shortage should not be about money; it should be about creating a positive learning environment for all students, inspiring them to guide future students just as they were guided. Instead of just increasing salaries, schools should have notable figures talk about how teachers have helped them achieve their dreams or have teachers talk about their love for teaching and why they teach. These videos should be shown on school websites and shared on all forms of social media, especially those commonly used by students, to reach the most people. By listening to how teachers inspire their students and how teaching is a rewarding job, more students would be inspired to pursue a teaching career.

However, the best way to recruit future teachers is for current teachers to set a standard of excellence. Teaching isn't an easy job; lessons need to be planned according to standards and coordinated with other teachers, and they need to be engaging, making students want to learn. According to W.B. Yeats, the first Irish writer to receive a Nobel Prize for Literature, "Education is not the filling of the pot but the lighting of a fire." An excellent teacher will not just tell, or explain, or demonstrate what they're teaching, they will inspire in students a desire to learn. A teacher should not just stand in front of students and teach, they should make a connection with their students. They should be patient with students and instead of thinking if a student can be taught, they should think on how they should best teach their students.

In my high school career, my teachers have shaped my goals for the future. They are the people that got me interested in science and technology, and they are the people who have encouraged me to reach my goals. I have played in band for my entire middle and high school career because my teachers encourage my interests in music and striving for excellence in everything I do. My participation in JROTC led me to want to join the military, and when that didn't work due to health reasons, work for the government in some fashion because my teachers were so passionate about their time in the military, serving our country, and the physical, mental, and financial benefits of working for the military that they inspired me, as well, to contribute to our country. My science and math teachers, though I have had many of them, allowed me to learn about engineering, sparking an interest that I hope to make into a career. It is not because of the knowledge itself, though it certainly helped me, that they imparted that helped me have a successful high school career, but the way they inspired me to want to learn. Without that inspiration, that drive, then I would not be at the same place,

academically, mentally, or emotionally, that I am at today - a straight-A student engaged in multiple sports and school activities, taking multiple AP classes, and accepted to my dream college.

That is why, overall, teaching is such an important career. It requires not only an expertise in knowledge, but the ability to connect with and inspire students, to help them when they face troubles and to make them want to learn. It is a two-way street, for every student being taught, teachers must also listen to their students to learn about and encourage them to be the best version of themselves. Teaching isn't about the benefits. That is why teachers should not be recruited by benefits, but by inspiring potential teachers to guide and help future students just as their teachers had guided and helped them.